



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Ralph DLG. Torres
Governor

Victor B. Hocog
Lieutenant Governor

DIRECTIVE No. 2017-0001

DATE: JUNE 13, 2017
TO: ALL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES
FROM: GOVERNOR
SUBJECT: COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS RESILIENCE WORKING GROUP

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth acknowledges that a changing climate is a growing concern to human communities and the environment worldwide; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth and other Pacific Islands are most vulnerable to and most seriously harmed by the adverse effects of climate change due to their small size and relative isolation; although, island communities have done little to contribute to the cause of climate change. The commonwealth and the other Pacific Islands account for less than 0.03% of current global greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, effects associated with climate change include changes in precipitation, sea-level rise, increased frequency and severity in storms. These events significantly affect the ability of the CNMI's infrastructure such as roads, power supply, and wastewater systems to be maintained. Other critical facilities like evacuation shelters, schools, and the hospital which are vital to community function are also vulnerable to sea level rise; and

WHEREAS, ecosystems in the CNMI that range from ridge to reef, especially corals, are vulnerable to the impacts of a changing climate; and

WHEREAS, preventing massive damage to ecosystems on a global scale cannot be done without reducing global greenhouse gas emissions and taking steps to curtail climate change; and

WHEREAS, it may be feasible to implement an integrated resource energy plan with the overall goal to maintain and improve infrastructure, improve community resilience to climatic events, and conserve ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth relies on a clean and healthy environment for our livelihood, survival, and way of life; and

WHEREAS, many of the communities, infrastructure, and ecosystems of the Commonwealth may be adversely affected by even a small rise in sea level or changes in rainfall; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth must continue to be proactive in adapting to the changes brought about by climate change to protect our infrastructure, communities and ecosystems; even as solutions to control carbon emissions are pursued; and

WHEREAS, scientific information, strong local leadership, adaptive management practices, traditional knowledge, stewardship, and community education and involvement will help protect and maintain our communities and the ecosystems upon which we depend; and

WHEREAS, it is vital for the Commonwealth to organize a climate change working group, hereinafter referred to as the CNMI Resilience Work Group to develop and implement a long-term climate change adaptation plan; and

WHEREAS, the process of developing a long-term climate change adaptation plan for the Commonwealth should involve participants from relevant sectors, including the Commonwealth Government, the private sector, the community, and appropriate federal agency partners that may be able to provide technical and financial assistance.

NOW THEREFORE, in order to give the CNMI Resilience Working Group the full support of the Executive Branch, I, **RALPH DLG. TORRES**, GOVERNOR, HEREBY DIRECT THE FOLLOWING:

All Departments, Divisions, Offices, Government Corporations, Boards, and Commissions of the Commonwealth Government shall appoint a representative from their respective offices to participate in the meetings, trainings, and associated activities of the CNMI Resilience Work Group.

The appointed representative shall be of a position of authority within their respective office as to make management-level decisions on behalf of their office, as necessary to carry out the working group's objectives and to develop and implement adaptation measures to protect our community and our environment against the impacts of climate change.

Coordination of the working group shall be conducted by the CNMI Climate Change Project Coordinator who will represent the Office of the Governor and report directly to the Governor on the discussion, actions, and needs of the working group.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand on the 13th day of June 2017.



RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor